Abolition of visas. An order was issued at the beginning of the year allowing nationals of Oman, the Trucial Coast, Muscat, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Yemen to enter Bahrain without being in possession of visas for Bahrain, issued by the British Consular or other authorities, provided that they had valid national passports or travel documents endorsed for Bahrain. Unfortunately this arrangement enabled a large number of Persians to enter Bahrain carrying travel papers describing them as being subjects of Trucial Shaikhdoms. The Government has no wish to restrict Arabs from other parts of the Gulf from coming to work in Bahrain, where there is still a demand for unskilled labour, but it views with distaste any increase in the Persian minority which exists in Bahrain. When it became evident that a number of Persians were entering Bahrain under the guise of being permanent residents of Oman or the Trucial Coast the passport authorities were ordered to allow such persons to remain in Bahrain not longer than 15 days. It is estimated that during the year about 9,075 immigrants from Oman and the Trucial Coast entered Bahrain in order to find work, they were issued with permits to remain in Bahrain for one year, subject to renewal. In almost every case the immigrants were men.

Illegal Entries. The number of persons who were arrested and repatriated to their countries, having attempted to enter the country without travel documents, was 124, consisting of 68 Pakistanis, 23 Omanis and 33 Persians. The number of persons who succeeded in entering Bahrain without being caught is undoubtedly large. The Pakistanis crossed the Gulf to Muscat by dhows and continued their journey by foot up the coast to Doha, there they chartered a dhow to take them to the nearest port in Saudi Arabia, on their way to Mecca. The Nakhuda, however, landed them on the Bahrain coast, somewhere near Jaw, probably telling them that it was the coast of Arabia. These unfortunate pilgrims were eventually sent back by steamer to Karachi.

During the year the Bahrain courts heard four cases against Bahrain Nakhudas who had landed passengers in Bahrain knowing that they were illegal entrants. They were severely dealt with. Most of the passenger smuggling is done by Qatar Nakhudas who land the people on unfrequented stretches of coast or on shoals on the Eastern side of Bahrain. Two Persian Nakhudas were prosecuted in the Agency Courts and sentenced to imprisonment and fines for the same offence.

In January 1953 information was received that a certain Persian Nakhuda, Ghulam Reza, a naturalised Bahrain subject, had arranged to ship a number of Persians to Bahrain. His launch arrived with 63 Persians on board who were refused permission to land, not being in possession of papers. They were transferred to another launch bound for Kuwait. Later some of the same passengers were found in Manama and it was discovered that the Nakhuda had, after leaving Bahrain, transferred the passengers to another vessel and landed them on the coast where they were met by motor buses which conveyed them to Manama. Ghulam Reza was subsequently arrested, prosecuted, imprisoned for one year and fined Rs. 4,000. His charge was Rs. 150 a head for landing Persians in Bahrain.

Bahrain Nationality. During the year 31 applications were received from people of various nationalities applying for Bahrain nationality. Of these 19 were accepted, being from persons long resident in Bahrain and possessing immovable property; three of these were Indian subjects and three were Pakistanis. The courts investigated 44 applications by Persians who claimed to have been born in Bahrain. Proof of birth, especially in the case of older people, cannot easily be produced. Only 9 of these applicants were able to prove that they were born in the country. At the beginning of the year an order was issued to the effect that no Persian whose application for Bahrain nationality was accepted would be issued with a passport until two years had elapsed from the date on which he was granted nationality. As a result of this order only a small number of Persians submitted applications. The main object of the Persians who applied for Bahrain nationality was to obtain passports with which to enter Saudi Arabia where their presence was not appreciated.

Passport Official's Course. Ali bin Abdulla, a clerk in the Passport Department, did a course in England studying and learning passport and immigration methods and procedure. The course was arranged by the British Government, the results appear to be satisfactory.